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Your ratings of trains ridden since mid-June should be in by December 15 in order to be included in our second train rating survey. The compiled results will be published in either the Second December issue or the First January issue.

In December we will announce the opening of our third survey, to cover trains ridden between Dec 15, 1975 and June 15, 1976.

Full rating instructions appeared in the Second October issue. Rate each category on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (extremely poor) thru 5 (average, acceptable) to 9 (extremely good). Rating categories are identified by the letters A-K as follows: (A) overall quality of service, taking everything into account; (B) service from on-board train personnel, except food service personnel; (C) service from food and lounge personnel; (D) quality of food aboard; (E) condition of cars; (F) desirability of route followed; (G) quality of station services; (H) condition of track & roadbed; (I) desirability of present scheduling; (J) train promotion & advertising; (K) desirability of types of equipment used on the train.

Include your comments as desired. Send ratings, separate from other correspondence, to: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you.

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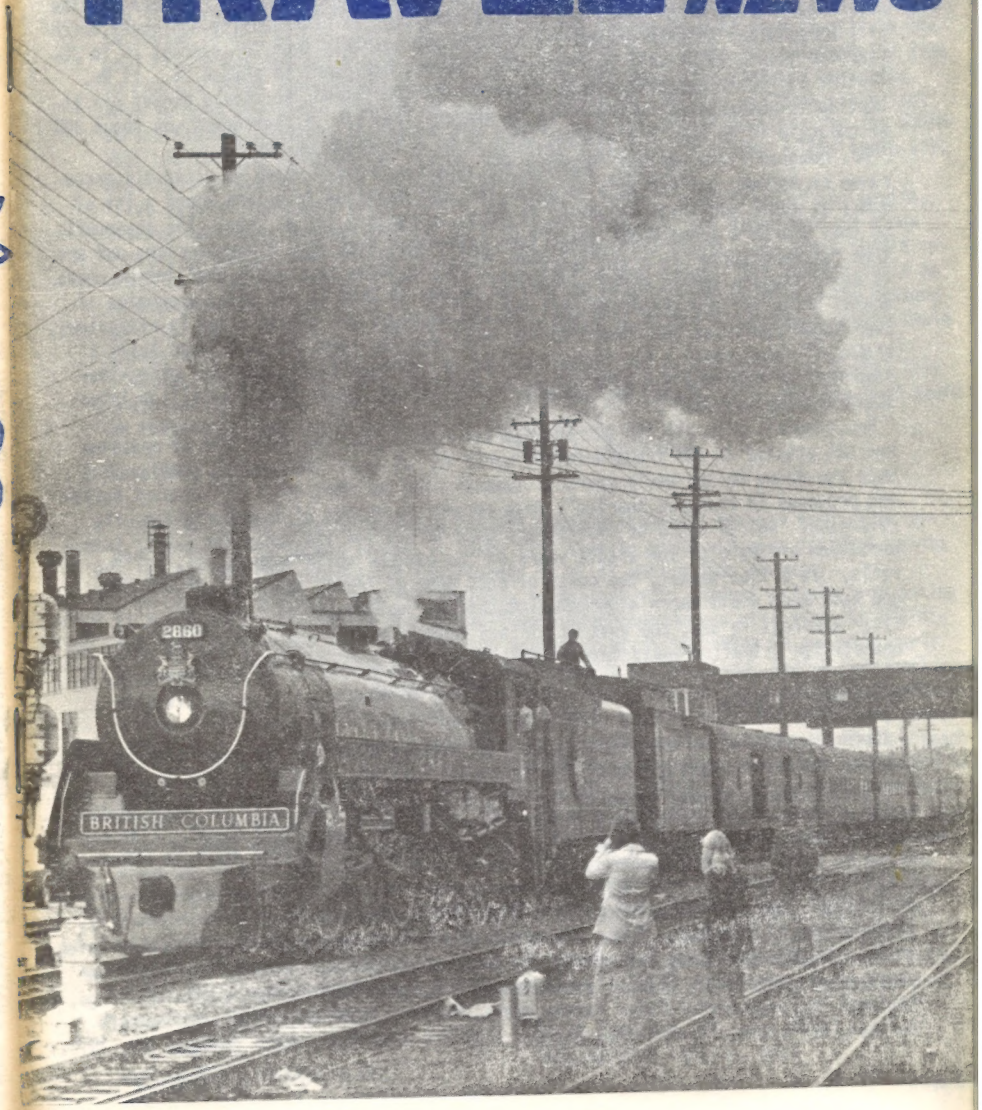

ON THE COVER:

British Columbia Railway's "Royal Hudson" steam excursion train arrives in Seattle at 2pm on Nov 1 for a rendezvous with the American Freedom Train (see last issue). Rail enthusiasts lined the Seattle waterfront to photograph the impressive steamer, shown here passing Piers 67 and 69 on the Burlington Northern main line, just north of the downtown tunnel. This is the route of Amtrak's PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL and NORTH COAST HIAWATHA trains. Photo by Glenn Lee.

LETTERS

A few points in rebuttal to Mr. Douglas's letter (last issue): Yes, Amtrak's load factor of 45% is nothing to brag about, but the comparable figures for the airlines are not much better (most seem to be in the 50-55% range), and Mr. Douglas does not seem to be disturbed by the airlines' performance in this regard. Furthermore, the additional equipment of which Mr. Douglas complains is high-density equipment which will (hopefully) be much cheaper to operate and maintain than the current 20 to 30-year-old fleet, which will be retired as the new equipment is phased in. If Mr. Douglas is really concerned about waste in transportation, he should direct his attention to automobiles, which carry an average load of 1.6 passengers, or about 30% of capacity if we take the average auto to be a 5-passenger model.

Mr. Douglas rants against "unnecessary vacation travel" which is allegedly encouraged by Amtrak, but neglects to point out that vacation travelers spend a lot of money at their destinations which, in turn, supports a lot of jobs. The observation that Amtrak's promotional fares take passengers away from other carriers and are thus "uncompetitive" is a non sequitur; lowering fares is exactly what Amtrak needs to do to compete and to build up traffic volume so that it may enjoy economies of scale. Finally, the assertion that the bus carriers are unsubsidized is ridiculous. Even Roger Lewis was once heard to ask "When was the last time Greyhound built a highway?" What would a bus ticket cost if it represented not only the above-the-road cost of carriage but also return of capital on the multi-multi-billion Interstate Highway system?

Mr. Douglas, I am all for entrepreneurial capitalism, but that form of endeavor has not existed in the transportation world for at least the last 50 years. What were you doing in the early years of federal road building and local airport building programs to preserve America's free enterprise system of transportation--its railroads? Amtrak would be unnecessary were it not for the expensive public transportation projects of the middle years of the century which took America off the rails. In a free market, the costs of each mode of travel would be internalized and each mode would carry a market-dictated--not government-dictated--share of traffic. Needless to say, the cost of air and highway travel would be so high that the competitive situation would favor trains for most intercity travel.

Mike Blaszak

Glenview, Illinois

Having just received your last issue, and reading about all the hoopla on the startup of the new Amtrak train, the LAKE SHORE LIMITED, I must speak my piece.

I am getting so darned tired of the only area of this country to get much needed passenger train service seeming to be all East of the Mississippi River. I am now fully convinced that Amtrak, Mr. Reistrup and possibly the entire American Government, still believe the only thing living West of the Mississippi River are degenerates, uncivilized Indians and gun-totin' outlaws, and stage coaches operating with 4- and 6-horse hitches.

We here in Denver and Eastern Colorado are saddled with one Amtrak passenger train each way a day. The schedule to Chicago is deplorable. The obvious poor choice of routes and the rapidly deteriorating track and plant of the Burlington Northern put this train on such a slow pace that it's really unbelievable that people would torture themselves by riding the train. Number 5 and 6 are forced to run over some of the most sloppy tracks West of the Mississippi River. The late 1030's and early 1940's, then up thru the termination of private passenger business placed this route in hot competition with the Union Pacific. The speeds of the CITY OF DENVER and the DENVER ZEPHYR were far faster than the limp-along Amtrak schedule of today.

Also, Amtrak and Mr. Reistrup tend to ignore the fact that corridor service along the front range of the Rockies has been needed for at least 5 years. Also, a Denver to Kansas City train is still not operating, and if and when it does it will be the most ridiculous operation ever thought up. It will be a waste of equipment and time to run the train from Denver to La Junta, Colorado, then make a stupid switching move to join the train from Denver with the SOUTHWEST LIMITED, and then pussy foot across Kansas, stopping at places that cannot generate enough business for the SOUTHWEST LIMITED and other Amtrak trains operating thru Eastern Kansas. This train will miss several Kansas cities that have as many as 5 colleges.

Two sets of equipment would handle the train to start, consisting of one engine, storage mail car, baggage package service car, 2 coaches, one diner-pub car minus liquor, as Kansas does not allow liquor sold within the state. The train should operate on a daytime schedule and make reasonably spaced stops. The coaches could be interchanged at Kansas City to Chicago and Washington DC, not requiring the passengers to change trains. At Denver the train would be a stub termination, which could change to a thru Portland train.

Amtrak has stated the only way they would consider a direct Denver to Kansas City train was by subsidy from the states of Colorado and Kansas. I'm sure the cost would be reasonable, and would only last a little while.

Roger L. Robertson

Loveland, Colorado

In view of the many nit-picking letters concerning Amtrak service which have appeared in RTN in recent issues, I think it's time to point out some positive points on Amtrak and its service--as experienced by 42 of our Chapter members.

We recently ventured from Philadelphia to Baltimore to conduct a field trip outing at the B&O Railroad Museum and the Baltimore Streetcar Museum utilizing the MONTREALER in both directions. While we had some initial difficulties in securing party accommodation on the MONTREALER, once that problem was resolved, Amtrak personnel were all found to be attentive to their jobs, and caring in their attitude towards us.

Duty supervisors at Philadelphia and Baltimore, as well as train crews were aware of our move, and train crews had made special on-the-spot provisions to block a coach off in each direction. We were met at Baltimore by the duty supervisor and guided to a chartered motorcoach to take us around the city. Dining car crews were especially attentive to our short travel time, and worked with hustle to serve meals to our members in both directions. Amtrak people do care, and while we are going to see some examples of poor personnel, this is not an occurrence which is limited to Amtrak.

Equipment will continue to present problems until the worst can be replaced--the success of the new Amcoaches is an example of improvements to come. We will not please the dreamers who wish to see the velvet plush seats, etc., returned, and we should not expect to. What we must aim to please are those individuals, rail enthusiast and non-rail enthusiast alike, who desire to have dependable, economical rail passenger travel at their disposal...

R. L. Eastwood, Jr., President
Philadelphia Chapter, NRHS

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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INQUIRIES TO AMTRAK BREAK ALLTIME RECORD

On Nov 26, the day before the Thanksgiving holiday, Amtrak recorded a record number of telephone calls to its information and reservation centers, 20% more than the same time in 1974. Amtrak spokesman Brian Duff said that while official figures were not yet available, it was believed that Thanksgiving train loadings were higher than 1974. Corridor trains were running to capacity, with some delays, and in the Midwest, where Chicago and other areas were hit by heavy snows, traffic was heavy on Amtrak routes. Amtrak recorded 81,711 telephone calls Nov 26.

In advance preparation for holiday crowds in Chicago, Amtrak had planned the following schedule alterations: Nov 26, a second section of train 304 St. Louis-Chicago, and a second section of train 355 Jackson, MI-Chicago (using MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE equipment). Nov 30: advance section of #354 to Jackson, leaving Chicago 3:50pm; advance section #347 lv Chicago 5:05pm, run nonstop to McComb, IL (using ex-CNW bilevel cars); advance section #59 (12 or more coaches) lv Chicago 6pm and make all stops to Carbondale, IL; second section 304 from St. Louis; second section 355 Detroit-Chicago, leave Detroit 5:10pm (10 cars, 3 engines).

AMTRAK ACCEPTS TWO GE ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES

Amtrak announced Nov 24 that it had accepted the first two units of a 26-engine order of high-speed electric locos from General Electric. The FRA certified them for speeds up to 85mph after modifications (see 2nd Oct issue). The FRA will test the engines at higher speeds next. They had been planned to reach 120mph. The first of the two engines (#950), equipped with head-end steam generator, went into revenue operation pulling conventional equipment on Phila-NY clocker runs Nov 26, making 2 runs each direction. The second loco, #965, equipped with head-end electric power, is now at Wilmington undergoing tests.

BLUE RIDGE TRAIN GETS AMCOACH EQUIPMENT

Amtrak's Washington DC-Cumberland MD BLUE RIDGE will be re-equipped with Amfleet cars effective Dec 1, the corporation announced Nov 26. It will carry 3 Amcoaches and an Amcafe car, and will be powered by GE diesels or E8 units converted to head-end electrical power. Because of the delay in obtaining the GE electric locomotives, Amtrak moved this train up higher on its priority list for the new equipment, since it can be powered by diesels on its route.

BROADWAY LIMITED SCHEDULE ALTERATIONS ANNOUNCED

In an unusual move, Amtrak announced Nov 18 in a formal press release minor changes in the schedule of the eastbound BROADWAY LIMITED, effective Nov 30. The changes are due to track work. The move was unusual in that the corporation does not ordinarily publicize such minor changes in such a formal manner; it seemed to reflect concern at Amtrak over the fate of the train's patronage now that the competing LAKE SHORE LIMITED is in operation. The new schedule is shown above.

Lv.	Chicago	3:30 pm	
	Gary	4:04 pm	
	Ft. Wayne	7:17 pm	
	Lima	8:29 pm	(instead 8:39 pm)
	Crestline	9:47 pm	(" 10:02 pm)
	Canton	11:38 pm	(" 11:53 pm)
Ar.	Pittsburgh	2:10 am	(" 2:17 am)
Lv.	Pittsburgh	2:25 am	(" 2:32 am)
	Johnstown	3:57 am	(" 4:04 am)
	Altoona	4:59 am	(" 5:06 am)
Ar.	Harrisburg	7:32 am	(" 7:39 am)
Lv.	Harrisburg	7:52 am	(" 7:57 am)
	Trenton	10:15 am	
	Newark	11:00 am	
Ar.	New York	11:17 am	

AUTO-TRAIN IS EARNING MORE MONEY

Auto-Train Corporation had increased earnings for the first half of fiscal year 1976, the corporation disclosed Nov 25--41¢ per share vs. 4¢ per share for the comparable 1975 period. On Nov 12 Auto-Train ran a special train for travel agents consisting of engines 4010, 4011, power car 136; cars 542, 522, 594, 804, 301 & 541, on the occasion of A-T's fourth anniversary and its announcement of negotiations with Amtrak. Train ran round trip Sanford-Orlando, FL.

Rail Canada

BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY has purchased four RDC-3 coach-&-head end units from Amtrak. They were to reach Vancouver in late November for rebuilding into all-coach configurations. The BC Railway has been short of RDCs, especially since the October wreck.

CANADA IS WORKING on lower highway speed limits. A national 55mph limit is being discussed, while the province of Ontario this month was planning a 60mph limit to replace the present 70mph limit on major highways.

CANADIAN NATIONAL TIMETABLE for winter is minus the nice centerfold Canadian map, and has calendars and details of the new Red, White and Blue fare plan. There are now off-season and on-season dates. The plan was developed to expand incentive fare opportunities for more travelers. Red and White fares are lower than before, and Blue fares are basically unchanged. Off-season travel uses Red and White fares, and on-season travel uses White and Blue. Other changes in schedules, besides those mentioned here earlier, are the replacement by Tempo trains of RDCs 651 and 654 from Toronto to Sarnia. On the Montreal/Quebec-Chicoutimi line, there had been 3 round trips per week Quebec to Chicoutimi. This has been cut to one round trip weekly and a new set of trains, M275 and M276, operate two round trips per week between Quebec and Riviere a Pierre. The "Passenger Special" which ran Fridays only between Sherbrooke and Coaticook, Quebec, has been deleted.

TORONTO'S SUBWAY SYSTEM, for the first time in its 21-year history, has uniformed guards stationed on platforms following the brutal stabbing of a 16-year old girl at the St. Patrick station of the University line in early November. Six stations on the line, lightly patronized after evening rush hour, will be guarded. "It is a sad day for the TTC," said chairman Gordon Hurlburt, "We've never had to have police on guard because there was never any need." The girl was stabbed repeatedly while riding an escalator. Her assailant was the object of an intensive manhunt. Some subway passengers said they planned to switch to streetcars as the community reacted in horror to the news.

WITHDRAWAL OF THE Bank of Montreal from CP's Windsor Station redevelopment plan has extended the life of the historic structure which CP had planned to demolish. At the same time, Ottawa had begun preliminary evaluation of a CP-CN coordination plan that called for moving all CP trains into CN's more modern station a few blocks away.

OTTAWA TRANSIT FARES will rise to 40¢ March 1. Ticket price will go from four for $1 to three for $1. The fares apply on the Ontario side of the Ottawa River; on the Quebec side, a similar increase will be in effect Jan 1. The new rates are expected to cut the $14 million deficit to about $11 million.

THE MANITOBA GOVERNMENT has approved an appropriation of $5.5 million more to Flyer Industries following what Mines Minister Sidney Green has reported was a "rather staggering loss" in 1974. The firm is manufacturing electric trolley coaches for a number of Canadian and American transit systems, and also manufactures diesel transit buses. Green blamed management problems and high production costs in relation to contract prices for equipment presently under construction.

COMMUTER FERRY SERVICE across the Vancouver Harbour will resume April 1, after a lapse of 20 years. Two passenger-only vessels will make the 8-minute run from downtown Vancouver to the foot of Lonsdale St., principal north shore artery. The undertaking is to reduce vehicle congestion on the 3-lane Lions Gate Bridge. Public opinion moulded by anti-auto campaigns has killed hope of another highway crossing.

A SUBWAY TRAIN was hijacked recently on Toronto's Bloor run. The eastbound rush hour train was taken over by Joseph Screen, who, posing as an inspector, asked the motorman to open his cab door, and Screen threatened him by simulating a pocket revolver. The motorman announced the train was going out of service, and 300 passengers alighted at Christie Station. Police boarded the following train, which caught up with the hijacked unit, and arrested the hijacker, charging him with mischief.

CANADIAN NEWS BRIEFS: CN closed its Victoria, B.C. ticket office Oct 31... Train traffic on CN was rerouted over CP Nov 18 between Kamloops and Mission, B.C. after a CN freight derailment that tore up 1000 feet of track... Canadian postal strike is 40 days old Nov 30 with no sign of settlement...

FREEDOM TRAIN SCHEDULE

The American Freedom Train is following the schedule below on its trip thru Southern Oregon, Northern and Southern California:

Leave Springfield, OR Nov 23 1:30am, arrive Sparks, NV 4:30am Nov 24 for display. Leave Sparks Nov 27 3am, arrive Sacramento 10am, on display between I and L Streets (assisted by 3 diesels thru the Sierra). Leave Sacramento 1am Dec 1, arrive Stockton 2:30am for display at foot of Weber Street under Interstate 5 overpass. Leave Stockton 3am Dec 4, via Tracy and Martinez, arrive Oakland 4:30am, on display at Army Base. Leave Oakland 2am Dec 9, via Dumbarton Bridge, arrive San Francisco 5:30am; on display at Presidio, engine on display at Aquatic Park. Leave San Francisco 9am Dec 14, arrive San Jose 10:40am, on display at Coleman Market overpass. Leave San Jose 1am Dec 18, via Tracy, arrive Fresno 11am, on display between Divisadero & Calavera Streets. Leave Fresno Dec 22, via Tehachapi Loop, to Pomona Fairgrounds for display. Leave Pomona Dec 31, to Santa Barbara, on display across from Dwight Murphy ballpark. Leave Santa Barbara Jan 5, to Los Angeles to join Santa Fe line for display locations south of Los Angeles.

Urban - Suburban Transit

LATE NIGHT OPERATION on BART began Nov 28, the traditional opening of the Christmas shopping season. Trains run until shortly after 1am (weekdays only), and latest boarding times in San Francisco to reach East Bay destinations are about 12:20am. Daytime Saturday service will also be scheduled the first 3 Saturdays of December. On Dec 31 BART will close at the normal 8pm. On the first day of extended operation, reports were that the system was heavily used. Shoppers were reported driving from as far as Sacramento to Richmond to board trains into San Francisco. In a press conference to be held Dec 1, BART head Frank Herringer is expected to name new leadership in operations, quality control and public relations departments.

THE RECOMMENDATION OF an added tax on automobile owners to finance public transit in the San Francisco area has come late this month from state Legislative Analyst A. Alan Post. A one-time .6% tax on motor vehicles and making permanent the .5% extra sales tax in BART counties were recommended to prevent a $12 million BART budget deficit next year, and help deficits of other Bay Area public carriers. The plan is sure to arouse controversy when public hearings begin in December.

THE CANADIAN FIRM of Bombardier-MLW-Worthington, Ltd., of Montreal was awarded the contract this month to build 36 Highliner commuter cars for the Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit District, at a cost of $27.2 million. UMTA must approve it.

TRANSIT BRIEFS: The Chicago & North Western announced Nov 20 that it will ask for a 41% fare increase from commuters because it has been unsuccessful in negotiations to join the Regional Transportation Authority... The Penn Central is threatening to cut off two daily Baltimore-Washington commuter runs because neither Amtrak nor ConRail is responsible for them... Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit District expects to start work Dec 9 on a 2.14-mile commuter service extension to new Governor's State station in Park Forest South. ICG will do the construction... The First Annual National Conference for the Transportation Disadvantaged will be held Dec 3-5 at the Shoreham-Americana Hotel in Washington. Registration fee is $50 (phone 609-695-3500)... Florida State University is holding its Fifth National Transportation Conference, with the theme "Improving the quality and quantity of transportation for elderly and handicapped" at Sheraton Olympic Villas, Orlando FL, Dec 10-12. Registration is $40. Write Dept. of Urban & Regional Planning, Florida State U., Tallahassee FL 32306...

RTN'S RAIL TRAVEL YEARBOOK 1975 has been delayed in production, but definitely will be out in December. Place your order now for early delivery. Limited edition. Send $3.50 (postpaid; Calif. add tax) to Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley CA.

MOVING THE FREEDOM TRAIN

by David Bragdon

One person turned to another on the platform at Portland Union Station and asked, "I wonder how many passenger trains leave for Salem at 3am?" This facetious question was followed by a second, unspoken question: and how many of them are pulled by 34-year old steam engines? The answer to both questions was "not many," and that made the trip upon which I was about to embark even more unusual. I was to accompany the American Freedom Train on its 53-mile move from Portland, Oregon, to the state capital at Salem as a member of the press.

There weren't many other reporters present when I arrived at the appointed hour of midnight on November 14. I had wondered why I had been instructed to be at the station by midnight when the train was not to depart until 3am, and other reporters had evidently had the same question and had decided to sneak in a bit more sleep.

At midnight the train was still in disarray, despite having closed its displays to the public two hours before. It was still split up into the different sections in which it had been arranged throughout its stay in Portland, with one notable exception: SP 4449 was not in the spot where it had stood noble guard over the platforms while the tourists looked it over. The 4449 was presumably in BN's Hoyt Street Roundhouse preparing for the trip to Salem. One could imagine that scene as being somewhat sentimental, with "The Light" being back in the same building in which it had been lovingly refurbished for its duties on its national assignment with the AFT. This was the building out of which 4449 had moved its 80-inch drivers under its own steam last spring for the first time in 15 years.

Meanwhile, the switching work was proceeding slowly by the power of gray Portland Terminal Railroad switchers. The enclosed outdoor display cars containing the Freedom Bell and other large artifacts were towed away and placed behind some cars which resembled baggage cars.

I decided to report to brass-railed, open-ended observation press car 205. After checking of credentials, other reporters began arriving, most of whom seemed to be from the Salem media, and soon the group of reporters and Freedom Train personnel were mingling on the back platform of car 205 as we waited for the show to begin.

At 1:30 the curtain went up: there was a steam whistling from the direction of the roundhouse, and 4449 slowly puffed down the platform, accompanied by a scurrying group of railfans running alongside. "The Light" was resplendent in its red, white and blue attire as it then sat, making steam sounds, waiting for the night's assignment. The 26 cars were already familiar to it, but tonight was a special departure: it was going to be hauling them over the Southern Pacific for the first time. There was bound to be an extra snap in its step this evening!

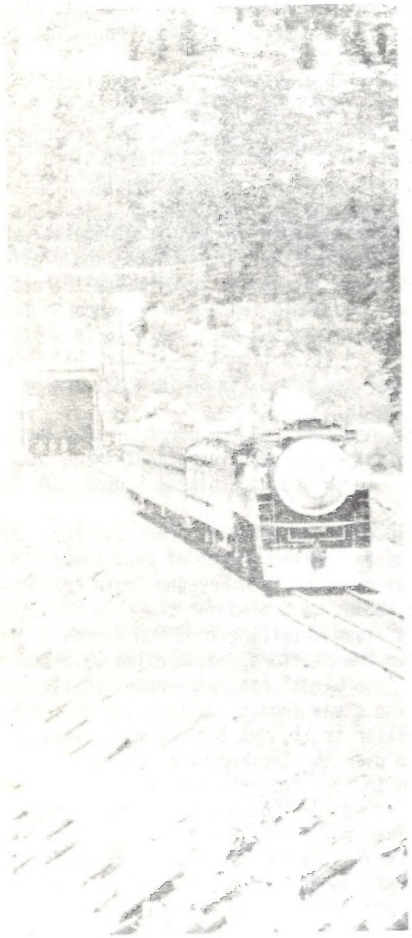
First, tho, the train had to be assembled, and a PTRR goat was already yanking away at the main cut of cars, which contained the indoor displays. They were placed behind the enclosed display cars. Next, the "Preamble" (the press car, a couple of lounge areas for crew, and the "pie car") were hauled out to the end of the train by PTRR 41 and coupled to the end.

The brass-railed deck of car 205 was to adorn the rear of the train, and as we sat in the cool morning air, the platform also provided a nice place for conversation. The AFT crew talked about the train. The head of security, who had worked for Gray Line Tours before joining AFT in Minneapolis, said that he still got quite a thrill from riding the train and seeing the people who would turn out simply to see it go by. He told of small watering stops where hundreds of people would turn out just to see the 45-minute pause.

The man who actually supervised the building of the special display cars, Paul Hudson, was serving as the trainmaster, and was obviously proud of his charge, as they all were. "When we end this train in Miami next year," Hudson lamented, "It-'ll be like burying your favorite child."

But that was in the future. Tonight there were 53 miles of track ahead. First, tho, we had to wait for the piggybacks bearing the ticket, popcorn, and souvenir booths to be turned on the turntable down at the roundhouse. The pigs travel right behind 4449, and it took about 20 minutes for turning before they could be coupled in behind The Light.

When they were set, it was already 2:50am, but still we had to wait for the brake pressure to build up. The SP pilot crew (wearing Amtrak uniforms) watched the gauge slowly build up on the rear of 205. They were enthralled by the whole train, but paternalistic trainmaster Hudson sat back smugly, the glow of the green and red running lights spreading over his cheeks. "We don't go until it reaches 90."



Last June 23 SP 4449 moved thru a Sierra tunnel on its way to Chicago to take over handling of the Freedom Train. Photo by Bob Glover.

Communication among the crew was complete. Almost everybody had a walkie-talkie and a call code. Moreover, the SP crew piloting the train had very good liaison with Hudson and his staff to insure that everything was to run smoothly. "This is fun," said the brakie.

The gauge built up and came around to 90. There was silence on the rear platform, and Hudson's nonchalance made the moment all the more dramatic as he pushed the button on his walkie-talkie and spoke quietly, "O.K., SP 4449, let's go. We're leaving town."

Nearly half a mile ahead of us, The Light breathed deeply, flexed, and started to roll easily. It was 3:07am.

An SP brakeman called the dispatcher to report that Extra 4449 West had left Union Station at 3:07am with no empties, 26 loads, and 2080 feet.

The 4449 heeled to the tight curve left, crossed Front Street, and inched out onto the Steel Bridge, over the Willamette River. The 4449 was home on SP. The rails under its huge frame were its own; they weren't the Mikados', the Snuff Dippers', nor even the Big Boys'. They were, at least for that night, exclusively The Light's.

It proudly took a slow right after crossing the bridge, arranging its train on a curve which made the lighted historical panels on the engineer's side visible to us back in 205. Its Mars light flicked around under the massive Interstate 5 ramps above, and it sent billowing clouds filtering up around the roadway and into the sky. We followed the east bank of the river, thru the industrial part of town, most of which was dormant--except for the "faithful." The "faithful" would be in abundance all the way to Salem, with cameras, tape recorders, or just children in hand, out of bed in the wee hours to see the Freedom Train go by.

The 4449 began to churn after going thru Brooklyn Yard in southeast Portland, altho Hudson forbids his train from moving faster than 45mph, and would like to keep it even slower. SP men in the yard flashed their lanterns as we passed.

Near Milwaukie, word was radioed back that somebody in the cab thought that they saw a motorcyclist run into the train on the engineer's side. The crew kept an eye out on the end, but we passed no sprawled motorcyclist, and the sighting was passed off as erroneous.

Somewhere between Clackamas and Oregon City we slowly came to a stop in a rural area. The Light had run into an unexpected red block. We sat for a few minutes, and suddenly slammed backwards for a few feet and jerked to a stop. We repeated this a couple of times, culminating in one blow which caused the coffee pot in the press car to fly off the table and spill over the rug. Then we slowly backed up about 1½ train lengths before making forward progress again and heading thru Oregon City. By this time it was obvious that we would not make the projected 4:30 arrival time in Salem, but we continued to move at a good pace alongside the river. Presently we came to some lights. A member of the SP crew glanced out the window and announced, "Well, we're going thru Hubbard." I was surprised. "Oh, did we get thru Canby already?" I asked. The SP man looked again and laughed, "You're right, this is Canby." The crew had a laugh over that.

We had taken an hour and 45 minutes to cover the first twenty or so miles, and I imagined the dispatchers in Eugene tearing their hair out and screaming, "Get that antique off our railroad!" which is what I imagine them saying every time the COAST STARLIGHT goes thru the division. But on board things were leisurely. Periodically Hudson would speak into the walkie-talkie, "Nice on the rear." The president of the Freedom Train Foundation was on car 205, and he seemed very happy about capacity crowds which had received the train at recent stops.

The miles were rolling away behind us, and at 5am we were approaching Woodburn. One of the SP brakies was explaining to reporters that the train would soon pass a hot box detector and that he would have to watch the light on it to see what it indicated. Just as the words, "and it shouldn't be flashing" escaped his lips, we whipped past the flashing light. Everyone groaned, and Hudson got on the radio to tell the engine crew they had tripped the hotbox detector. We would have to stop and check.

One of the AFT crew was convinced that it was 4449's firebox that had defiantly blown SP's diesel age technology. Apparently the Freedom Train has been tripping hot box detectors all over the country.

It was 5:02am when the SP brakemen descended to hike to the front and make a visual check. We had received clearance from Eugene to stay in the single track block that we were in until 6:30 if necessary. It was a quiet vigil on the end of car 205, as we waited in the still night for official word that it had indeed been 4449 and not a journal box which was hot. But, of course, they had to check it out. The radio crackled. It was the SP brakeman, about ¼-mile ahead: "I thought that I saw some smoke around here, but I must have been mistaken" he said.

Everyone, especially trainmaster Hudson, breathed easier when we got underway again. As we passed thru Woodburn with photographers' flash cubes imitating lightning outside the windows, one of the AFT crewmen talked of his future. He had worked on circus trains most of his life, and AFT was his last high iron fling. "When this is over," he said, "I'm going to Florida to play golf and chase blondes." But all the crew members seemed to have an attachment to the train that would be too meaningful for them to forget. They seemed to have a sense of pride that they were participating in an event which was conveying artifacts of American heritage to their fellow citizens. AFT is the only bicentennial event which will come within an hour's time of most Americans, and the crew back in car 205 felt that was very important to what they were doing.

But the desire to rush 26 cars of history to Salem was interfered with by a red SP block that was more mindful of rail safety than of national heritage. As we slowed, the security agent jumped from his seat and went out the rear, saying, "I've got to protect the back." A reporter called after him, laughingly, "Don't let a

train run into us!" The security agent turned, grinning, "To hell with you. I've got to protect the artifacts!"

We got moving again shortly, but close to 6am, with human energy at a low point, fatigue began to set in. Somebody asked whether the sun ever comes up in Oregon (No, somebody answered, the rain just becomes brighter). But Salem was not far down the track, and we could hear radio arrangements being made already for the SP switcher which was to move AFT from the Amtrak depot to the display area downtown.

Trackside spectators increased in size as we grew close to Salem. We had come almost 53 miles, but 4449 can go 120 without being watered, if necessary. But for this morning 53 would be enough, and we pulled into the Salem station at 6:20am, 3 hours and 13 minutes after leaving Portland.

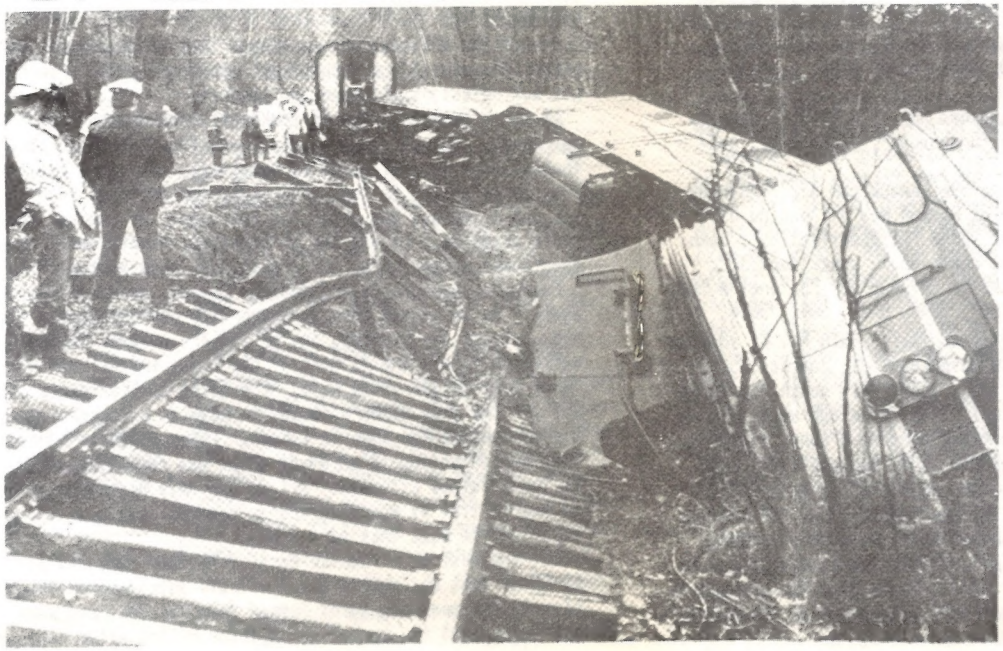
Everyone was genuinely pleasant as the goodbyes were said on the rear of 205. Some of us (including the SP pilot crew) trudged off to the Greyhound depot to catch the "dirty dog" back to Portland. Others were met by family in Salem, or went to file stories. The friendly security agent was standing on the brass-railed platform of car 205 as we left, calling out, "See you all in 200 years!"

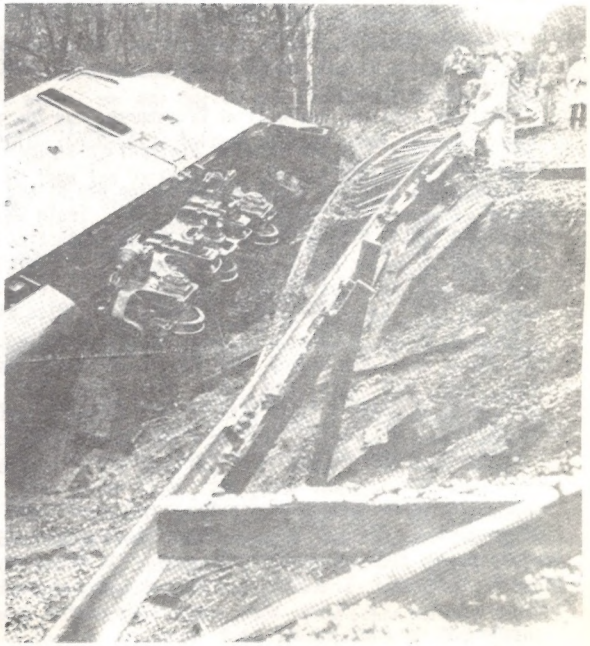
SOME WRECKS ON AMTRAK

An Amtrak derailment that nearly escaped our attention occurred on Oct 20 just after 4am, in the town of Charlestown, NH, along the Connecticut River 7 miles north of Bellows Falls, VT. The northbound MONTREALER, running 55 minutes late, hit a section of track that was undermined by washouts from heavy rains, and the two engines and baggage car derailed and toppled over, leaving the other cars upright on the track. There were 95 passengers aboard--81 coach and 14 first class--and none was injured. The engineer and fireman were treated for minor injuries at a hospital. There were three washouts under the B&M track, and one sleeper was left standing on a section of track with no support below. Eight cars were left standing, to be hauled away by another engine, while passengers were bused to destinations.

Diesel fuel from the two engines spilled into the river, and a cleanup crew began working on it within 12 hours. Workers built a shoo-fly around the wreck and reopened the B&M line 16 hours later. The accident happened in a spot where washouts have usually not occurred. The overturned equipment was moved to the B&M rip track at East Deerfield, MA to await repairs.

The southbound train that day was supposed to originate in Bellows Falls, with passengers from north of that point brought in by bus. (Photos by Wallace Baker, courtesy of the Keene (NH) Sentinel.





Another Turboliner grade crossing wreck happened Nov 19 at Elwood, IL, 45 miles southwest of Chicago when a 3-axle dump truck loaded with asphalt failed to stop at an ICG rail crossing warning sign and slammed into the side of southbound Turboliner 301. The 5-unit train, pulled by power unit 67, was struck at the rear of the lead unit, and the other four cars derailed. Between 30 and 40 passengers were injured, out of the 111 aboard, with seven hospitalized and three described as seriously injured. There was $800,000 damage done to the train, and $15,000 to the track. The truck driver was treated for injuries and released. The train was carrying a delegation of 80 Democratic women political lobbyists bound for Springfield to help support a vote on an education measure. Among the injured women was the sister of Chicago's Mayor Daley's wife. Passengers described the scene as one of pandemonium and called it a miracle that there were no deaths. The driver of the truck was cited by police.

A freight derailment on ICG on Nov 15 near Richton Park, IL, caused by vandals, forced the cancellation of Amtrak train 381, the ILLINI and delayed the PANAMA LIMITED's departure 3 hours. Northbound train 392 was delayed one hour. On Nov 27 an ICG freight derailment south of Springfield, IL blocked that line until mid-afternoon. The derailment of 2 engines of train 53, the FLORIDIAN, at 6:45am Nov 28 at 40th St. in Chicago delayed that train's arrival slightly. There were no injuries in the minor accident.

CARS & CONSISTS

*SILVER STAR, train 81, in South Carolina Oct 4: engines 642, 605; baggage 1050, bag-dorm 1420, sleeper 2766 "Savannah", sleeper-lounge 3230 "Sun Beam", diner 8015, coaches 4444, 4466, 4428, 4577, Pub car 3409, coaches 4429, 4591, 4415, 4560, 4535, diner 8091, sleeper 2785 "Marion County." Oct 25: engines 602, 645; baggage 1049, bag-dorm 1402, sleeper 2764 "Orlando", sleeper-lounge 3210 "Keystone State", coaches 5624, 5605, 4440, diner 8020, Pub car 3408, coaches 4417, 5476, 4419, 4428, 4553, sleeper 2767 "Jacksonville." Oct 31: engines 647, 644; baggage 1097, bag-dorm 1405, sleeper 2785 "Marion County", sleeper-lounge 3227 "Virginia Beach", coaches 4566, 4466, diner 8013, Pub car 3406, coaches 5457, 4441, 5626, sleeper 2776 "Alachua County", SCL business car 309 (added at Columbia).

*SAN DIEGAN, train 770, Nov 10: engines 416 (E-8), 451 (E "B"); baggage 1158, coach 5235, coach-snack-lounge 3820, coach 5228, private car "La Condesa." Train 771, Nov 10: engines 504, 417 (E-8); baggage 1167, coach 5232, coach-snack-lounge 3821, coach 6033, 5236, 7502; Ice Capades baggage cars ICAP 107, 105, 106. Train 775, Nov 10: engines 504, 417; baggage 1167, coach 5232, coach-snack-lounge 3821, coach 6033, private car "La Condesa." (100mph speed recorded on trip of this train.)

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, at Pasadena Nov 15: engines 528, 507, 525, 503; baggage 1051, bag-dorm 9993, hi-level coach 9916, hi-level diner 9980, hi-level coach 9909, sleeper 2218 "Indian Scout", dome lounge 9350, diner 8042, sleepers 2727 "Pine Pass", 2626 "Pacific Plateau." Train 4 seen arriving Chicago Nov 23 with private car CTS 3343 "Lady-Gaye-Laurel" in it, owned by Jct-Air Inc. of El Cajon, CA and Elkridge TN.

*LONE STAR, train 15, at Chicago Nov 23: engines 510, 515; baggage 1172, sleepers "Palm Loch" & "Regal Creek"; 8032, 3382, 9912, 9953, 9956, 9960, 9929, 2751 "Palm Dome" (not a dome).

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 40 at Chicago Nov 23: engines 588, 594; baggage 1189, 1032; coaches 5263, 5400; slumbercoaches 2002, 2029 "Loch Katrine"; coaches 5406, 5255, lounge 3404, twin-unit diner 8804, 8805; sleeper-lounge 3201 "Woodland Stream"; sleepers 2239 "Elberton", 2555, 2560.

*SOUTHERN CRESCENT, Amtrak train 172, at Philadelphia Sept 24: engine 906 (GG-1); SR 2012 "Saluda River", SR 827, Amtrak cars 5242, 6060, 3962, 6074, 5685, parlor 1702 "Fairfield County."

*NATIONAL LIMITED, train 31 at Pittsburgh, Nov 20: engines 595, 450 (E-9B); baggage 1184, sleepers 2605 "Pacific Castle" (L.A.-N.Y.), 2708 "Greenwood"; diner 8002, coaches 5444, 5455, 5440.

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 448 at Boston Nov 8: engine 596; snack car 3322 "Anthony Wayne", sleeper 2773 "Norfolk", coach 5651. Train 448 at Boston Nov 17: engine 592, cars 3321 "Molly Pitcher" (put on at Albany-Rensselaer), 2836 "Missouri Valley", 5646. Train 449 at Boston Nov 11: engine 596; 2773 "Norfolk", coach 5657, snack car 3322. (Nov 11 load: 40 on at Boston, 7 at Back Bay.) Train 49 at Chicago Nov 23: engine 592; bag-dorm 1532, cars 2804 "Angel Island", 2304 "Rice Bird", 5646, 8333, 5682, 5644.

*Orange, Black, & Crimson Express, special Phila-Boston football train Nov 8: engines 920 (GG-1, Phila-New Haven), 318, 293, 3--? (E-8's, New Haven-Boston); coaches 1504, 1534, 1585, 1597, 1521, 1596, 1509, 1574, 1590, 1593, 1576, 1589 (this coach displayed at Penn Station May 1, 1971 with "first" Amtrak interior), 1545 (this car used to show football movies enroute). All cars ex-CONGRESSIONAL LIMITED coaches & conv. sleepers.

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11 at San Jose Nov 8: engines 554, 557; baggage 1107, bag-gage-dorm 1501, coaches 4815, 4811, 4872, 4495, 4852, 4858; lounge 3332, diner 8035, sleepers 2726 "Pine Mesa", 2722 "Pine Island." Train 14, Los Angeles, Nov 11: engines 571, 569; baggage 1057, bag-dorm 1503 "San Pascal"; coaches 4867, 4821, 4505, 4508, 4510; lounge 3370, diner 8031, sleepers 2714 "Pine Creek", 2710 "Pine Arroyo", private car "La Condesa." Train 11, San Jose, Nov 20: engines 552, 570; baggage 1107, bag-dorm 1501; coaches 4815, 4811, 4861, 4482; lounge 3334, diner 8035, sleeper 2726 "Pine Mesa", deadhead diner 8103 & coach 7502.

THE REINCARNATION AND THE ACCOMMODATION TRAIN

by Ken Maylath

THE OLD COMPETITION BETWEEN THE PENNSYLVANIA AND THE NEW YORK CENTRAL ROUTES FROM NEW YORK TO CHICAGO MAY BE REVIVED UNDER AMTRAK

Anticipation and introductory celebration over, the LAKE SHORE LIMITED was now setting about the business of transporting the public between Boston, New York and Chicago. Ironically, its numbers, 48 and 49, were assigned the BROADWAY by the Penn Central in the closing years of its operation of that train. The LAKE SHORE turns out to be a reincarnation of the New York Central on several grounds. The name itself is former NYC, of course. So is the route. Even most of the equipment used, it turns out, originated with the Water Level Route--as part of that huge equipment order right after World War II from Budd.

My rendezvous with the LAKE SHORE took place on the third day of operation at Springfield, MA, after an Amfleet ride from Baltimore to New Haven on the MINUTE MAN and a run from New Haven to Springfield aboard a pair of RDC's--one refurbished and one with its original non-reclining seats. Operations were on time all the way.

With several minutes to spare, the headlight of diesel unit 590 came into view down the straight stretch east of the Springfield station. Downstairs, paint and ladders testified to the repair work continuing as passageway and platforms are reactivated after several years of disuse.

The 590 was trailed by sleeper 2011 "Cardinal" (ex-B&O), former NYC coach 5646, and galley lounge 3321. Word was that the 2011 was a last minute substitution, having arrived in Boston on the NIGHT OWL that morning. The regular car, it was said, had been given a complete cleaning, but someone neglected to replace the mattresses. The 3321 is one of those cars converted from a parlor, with the capability of serving airline-style meals, and was pulled out of service in the Corridor for use between Boston and Albany only.

Several other passengers boarded at Springfield to join the fairly decent crowd on the short consist for the run thru the Berkshires. Things went nicely during that first leg of the trip--keeping in mind that four hours to cover 100 miles or so is nothing great, with the "Castleton Bridge backup" described by Bill McDonald (2nd Oct RTN). Bill's concern about keeping the B&A portion of the schedule proved to be unfounded. We clicked along without delay--and had to wait ten minutes for time in Pittsfield. Arrival in Albany-Rensselaer came a couple of minutes to the good in spite of a full 40 minutes consumed in the backup move. (I joined several other rail enthusiast types at the rear door to watch the slow descent to the Hudson.)

As we climbed thru the hills, I enjoyed some airline-style Yankee Pot Roast in the 3321. The little card-type menu was stamped "LAKE SHORE LIMITED", and the car, the last one, carried a drumhead sign on the rear--both nice touches. The meal was quite satisfactory.

The New York section eased into Albany ten minutes late behind a pair of E units which were dropped so the entire train could continue with the 590. Also dropped were the two rear coaches, 6440 and 6416, both ex-NYC. They carried the unreserved New York-Albany crowd. That left baggage-dorm 1516 (ex-SCL), sleeper 2830 "Klamath Valley" (a former NYC 10-6), and former NYC coaches 5657 and 5653. Amtrak own 7 of the Valley series sleepers--and they're supposed to be the backbone of the LAKE SHORE sleeper service.

It came as little surprise that the passenger load out of New York was somewhat greater than from Boston. While the Boston sleeper carried a scattering of passengers, the one from New York was sold out.

Given the number of switching moves in Albany, the late arrival of the New York section meant a late departure to the west--nearly 20 minutes down, as it turned out. We just about held our own across New York State to Rochester after which I caught some shuteye.

FORTY YEARS AGO the Pennsy pictured its BROADWAY LIMITED this way, emphasizing the "speed and security" of the train's 20-hour trip between Chicago and New York. Collection of RTN.

Morning came under threatening skies, and we were rapidly approaching Cleveland. Our lateness was gone. We arrived with a few minutes to spare before our 7:30 departure and exchanged a couple of dozen passengers.

Breakfast in the 24-seat dining section of 8337 brought some good thick-style French toast and the realization that with the kind of passenger count expected during the holidays, that car will be hard pressed to accommodate everyone. It was well-filled even for this off-season Monday on a new run.

I must take some issue with the unnamed RTN reader (2nd Oct issue, p.15) that the reasonably well-maintained CTC welded rail former NYC main is good for 79 is not 90 mph. Seventy-nine is the practical limit given the current lack of train control. Aside from that, much of the line is not suitable for 79 because of track condition tho track gangs were in evidence at various points. Poorly maintained CTC interlockings often require slowdowns even where the rest of the track is fairly good. And some stretches, especially between Toledo and Elkhart, are downright bad. We held 30-40mph for a number of miles at one point--and that was enough.

Altho ten minutes late out of Toledo because of extra time in watering the cars. we still eased into Elkhart with 15 minutes to spare. That was evidence enough that the current schedule is fairly loose except across New York State. Arrival in Chicago would have been on the nose, save getting stabbed by a freight about a mile

from Union Station. About 70 passengers, plus a few Amtrak people keeping an eye on their new baby, detrained.

Overall, it was not a bad start. The reliability, personnel, equipment all seemed quite satisfactory or better. Passenger loadings seemed fairly respectable. And numbers 48 and 49 certainly fill a big void.

* * *

Having ridden the "reincarnation," it was on to "the accommodation train" with less than a one-hour pause in the Windy City. "Accommodation train" is the phrase used by Paul Reistrup to describe trains 40 and 41, the BROADWAY LIMITED. "We have to do better", said the Amtrak president. Having ridden the train several times during the past two years, I felt that things are better now, aside from track conditions and lengthened running time.

Number 40 was a long consist, not especially crowded, on an off-season Monday afternoon. At the rear were two of those dozen Rock Island sleepers Amtrak purchased a couple of years after its inception from a private owner. At one time they were earmarked for that stillborn second train to Chicago on the BROADWAY route. My space was in the rear car, to Washington, 2560 "Wrigley Field." The layout is an unusual 8-6. Ahead of the two RI cars was another oddball with 12 bedrooms--2292, a former SP car originally from the GOLDEN STATE. Continuing forward came another pleasant surprise: ex-B&O bedroom lounge 3252 "Metcalf." This is a flat-end observation. Then came the twin-unit diner; ex-Army lounge 3403; four 5200-series coaches formerly in Florida service; slumbercoaches 2028 and 2004; and a pair of baggage cars. It doesn't say so in the schedule, but one slumbercoach now operates to Washington along with a sleeper, coach and the Harrisburg-Washington diner-lounge. The equipment, overall, seems a slight improvement. The RI sleepers are quite nice, tho mine provided a rather rough ride over the trucks on that PC track out of Chicago.

The worst section of rail seemed to be the segment between the Windy City and Ft. Wayne. At 70 it was bounce, jounce and jolt. The next couple of divisions seemed slightly better, and sleep was no problem after Canton, OH. East of Pittsburgh it's generally not that bad. With the longer schedule, we had no problem staying on or near schedule. A little time could actually be cut.

We rolled into Harrisburg with ten minutes to spare. And the Washington section moved right along in its new routing via Philadelphia and new responsibility handling passengers for Lancaster, Pauli, 30th Street, and Wilmington. I stepped off in Baltimore ten minutes to the good. A check on a couple of other occasions has shown on-time operations here. While the extra running time isn't a plus as such, at least the average passenger won't be uptight about chronic lateness and about a connection that, unknown to him, can seldom if ever be made.

Another improvement is the food service. The BROADWAY now features menus that are more impressive looking--"BROADWAY LIMITED" is printed on the cover--and contain a wider selection. The full dinners are more complete, with the addition of cheese and crackers and a relish tray at the beginning, along with an after-dinner mint. And prices are still quite attractive for what you get. Eating in that twin unit was extremely enjoyable--especially with off-season crowds. Service was excellent. Of course, the Washington-Harrisburg diner-lounge, which turned out to be ex-NYC car 8332, is more limited. Breakfast selection was modest--with no French toast or the like. A cook, single waiter and hostess held the fort but managed to keep up with things fairly well. It may not equal the twin-unit, but it beats the former arrangement of existing on sandwiches or waiting until Harrisburg to have dinner after 8pm.

In short, various changes in the BROADWAY's operation during recent months should leave a better taste in the mouth of the average traveler. The biggest problem remains those bad sections of track.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

PRESIDENT FORD SIGNED, late this month, the DOT appropriations bill, giving the department $4.86 billion for fiscal 1976. The bill includes the $90 million Congress asked for for rebuilding railroad track by rehiring unemployed maintenance of way men. The President had been expected to veto the bill..... THE KEEN EYES of our timetable examiners have spotted an error in the Amtrak Oct 26 Midwest schedules: Turbo 301 leaves Springfield at 11:06am, not the 11:16 shown. It is believed that Amtrak will reprint the timetables to correct the error (herewith, another collector's item timetable?)..... SPEAKING OF TIMETABLES, that timetable catalog feature will appear in our 1975 Rail Travel Yearbook. The Yearbook seems more like a reality now that we have the handsome, glossy blue-and-white covers in hand, and the innards will be out this month. Our apologies for the delay. And the next issue of RTN, our Fifth Anniversary Issue, is a little yearbook in itself. Be sure you don't miss it--it will be the most unusual issue we've ever published...

* * *

THE NATIONAL LIMITED has lost its sleeper lounges. Presumably they have been moved to the upgraded BROADWAY LIMITED..... REPORTS FROM CHICAGO tell us that the coach section of the new LAKE SHORE LIMITED is jammed daily..... SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE on Nov 19 cleared the ConRail bill, and the Senate version is described as more sweeping than that wanted by the White House. It makes changes in the way ConRail is financed, and gives the DOT less influence on it. It provides a total of $8 billion to railroads for rehabilitation. Money to upgrade the Colonial Corridor is included in the bill..... "LARGEST CORPORATE REORGANIZATION in American history" is how the New York Times (Nov 30) describes the formation of ConRail, in a lengthy article. And things are starting off from scratch, much as they did with Amtrak. The Times pictures the Philadelphia office with a paper note taped on the door, reading "ConRail open"..... JAPANESE PUBLIC WORKERS went on strike Nov 26, stopping railroads, postal service, and other functions. They're striking for the right to strike among public workers. On Nov 29 a privately owned subway was disrupted by smoke bombs thrown by students, in Tokyo and Osaka. No talks have been scheduled..... CONGRESS HAS FINALLY come up with a comprehensive energy bill, and it will be made public Dec 2, and appears likely to be passed. The bill is strongly a compromise measure, and deals primarily with the pricing of crude oil. No one knows yet how it would affect the cost of gasoline to the consumer.....

* * *

IN THE WAKE of the two recent tragic grade crossing accidents on the Chicago-St. Louis route, the FRA, according to the Chicago Tribune, is "quietly" making studies of how to cut down the railroad crossing fatalities. One problem is the high cost of protecting crossings, and the FRA has found that close to half the collisions occur at crossings which have gates or signals..... YUCATAN SHIPPING COMPANY a newly formed company, announces a 33-hour car-ferry service between Miami and Puerto Morelos on the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. The twice-weekly service is to start up before the end of the year..... ROBERT J. DOOLEY, who initiated Amtrak's computerized reservation system, was named Assistant V.P. for Information Systems by Amtrak Nov 26. At the same time, Ms. Elyse Wander, who has been with Amtrak since 1973, was named Corporate Secretary..... REMEMBER THE MAN who fell to the floor and made nationwide news when his toilet seat on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR broke? Now Greyhound has been ordered to pay $4300 to a Berkeley, CA woman because the bus from Monterey she was riding swerved when she was in the rest room and caused her posterior to knock out the emergency window and become lodged in it. The incident happened May 3, 1974..... A DOME CAR is to be added to the new Chicago-St. Louis ABRAHAM LINCOLN, Amtrak said this month. It will alternate operations with the parlor-observation now on the train. The St. Louis Globe-Democrat this month featured a rave review of the train. Our Jack Ferry went to ride the parlor car recently and found it sold out.....

PALATKA, FLORIDA BECOMES a flag stop for the CHAMPION, due to a 2-year effort by octogenerian Mrs. Lillian Price of that town. The one-year experimental stop will be effective next April 26, with the spring schedule changes..... RENO FUN TRAIN between San Francisco/Oakland and Reno made its first seasonal run Nov 7-9. The train is now in its 12th season, with 14 weekend departures scheduled, the last being April 30..... A TYPICAL EXAMPLE of governmental ineffectiveness is the press release we received Nov 29 (two days after Thanksgiving) from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, urging us to drive carefully during the Thanksgiving holiday..... IF YOU RIDE the Egyptian Railways and the air conditioning fails, the penalties to the carrier are more severe than Amtrak experiences. Quote: "In such a case, the passenger can have a refund (1 mill per km) if he presents his ticket to the arrival station within 24 hours from the time of arrival...

* * *

FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION on Nov 14 issued a procedures manual and application forms for state and local bodies requesting federal assistance for continuation of rail service on lines to be abandoned when bankrupt railroads in the Northeast and Midwest begin operation as a single system next March. Address Office of Federal Assistance, F.R.A., 400 7th St., S.W., Washington DC 20590..... BOTH OREGON SENATORS and Sen. Frank Church of Idaho recently met with Amtrak's Paul Reistrup to push for resumption of service over the UP route thru Oregon and Southern Idaho. They said Amtrak has been dragging its heels on this matter. Reistrup apparently did not argue on the legal aspect of the resumed operation, but rather on the start-up date. Amtrak would like the date to remain vague, while the Senators feel that fall, 1976 is better..... ONE AMTRAK OFFICIAL was overheard at a recent gathering talking up restoration of a number of overnight passenger runs, including the LARK between S.F. and L.A.; the PIONEER LIMITED on the Chicago-Minneapolis run; and of course the GULF WIND, New Orleans to Jacksonville, FL..... AMTRAK HAS SUGGESTED that railroads, in maintenance procedures, change the tapering of wheels of the SDP-40F locomotives, apparently an outgrowth of engineers' feelings of concern over the sway of the machines at speed. Amtrak said (reports the Wall Street Journal, Nov 14) that the suggestion has been accepted by SCL, BN, ICG, and Santa Fe.....

* * *

AN INTERESTING REPORT on Paul Reistrup's recent trip to Europe to look over equipment that Amtrak might try out, appears in Railway Age (Nov 10--see also Quotes, below). The article implies that Reistrup is not overly happy with the outdatedness of the equipment it has on order--the Metroshell (Amfleet) cars and the bi-levels. The article points out that Britain's HST and APT and France's TGV, along with the Canadian LRC, are all candidates for Amtrak corridor use. Reistrup talks as if the UA TurboTrain is out of the running, and suggests that the LRC might be used on the SAN DIEGAN route. The TGV, which Reistrup called "fantastic," stands for Tres Grande Vitesse, and is a gas turbine electric train that has run as fast as 200mph..... A COLLABORATION ON magnetic levitation vehicles between U.S. and Russian designers is reported by Railway Age..... FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION estimated this month that the states will collect about $13.5 billion of revenue from state road user taxes in 1975, 3.2% more than the $13.1 billion collected in 1974..... THE ST. LOUIS Union Station Amtrak ticket office was robbed of $1400 by two gunmen the evening of Nov 21..... THE AMTRAK AD shown on page 11 runs currently in Midwestern newspapers.....

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"We went at 159 mph and I didn't have to hold onto a thing. The only thing that concerned me was we came into stations so fast I was scared we were going to suck up everybody as we went buy."

--Paul Reistrup test-riding a French TGV train, quoted in Railway Age, Nov 10.

(Yes, Paul--buy it! Buy it!)

Express Ads

DRAWING ROOMS ON AMTRAK! It's possible, on occasion, to travel in drawing room luxury at bedroom prices. For full information, contact "the train people" at GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, 9th Floor, San Francisco 94105, or call us at (415) 398-2994. And of course moneysaving "family plan" applies!

LUXURIOUS open-platform lounge-observation car available to groups of 25 for Oakland/Reno fun trips. R/T cost for group of 25 - $59 each. LA CONDESA, 969 Santa Ysabel, Baywood Park, CA 93402. Phone (805) 528-1002 6-11 p.m.

WANTED: PRR Shenango Mountain Laurel china. All types. Also PRR silverplate. William L. Staiger, 4160-A King George Drive, Harrisburg PA 17109.

THREE RAILFAN FUN-TRAINS--YOU'RE INVITED: #1 MEXICO (Jan 17-Feb 2) Mexico City, Veracruz (streetcars), Oaxaca, Puebla, Trip of Thousand Wonders. #2 WINTER SNOW (Feb 16-Mar 6) 9341 miles, Moffat Tunnel, Donner Pass, Rogers Pass, Cross Canada in Winter, Montreal, Adirondack, New York City, Bicentennial Philadelphia. #3 MEXICO (Mar 20-Apr 4) Acapulco, Taxco, Guadalajara, Copper Canyon Rail trip. Write for details: MIDWEST TRAVEL, 2936-R Bella Vista, Midwest City OK 73110.

FOR THE KIDS FOR CHRISTMAS -- 28 page storybook to color. "STEAMY" is a locomotive on the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad. His adventures on the ex-D&RGW narrow gauge will give youngsters a feel for Rocky Mountain railroading as it was. $1.75. Dave Ulmer, 1407 Holmes Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

Let the busboys know exactly what you think of their anti-Amtrak ads. Write National Association of Motor Bus Owners, 1025 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington DC 20036. Use certified, return-receipt-requested mail for best results. Or call 202-293-5890. Also write your senator or congressman.

IRON HORSES OF THE SANTA FE TRAIL-Worley now back on the tracks. Second edition scheduled to arrive on or about Jan 1. Reserve your copy now, limited edition. Pay on publication $34.50 plus $1.50 shipping and handling. Send SASE and you will be notified when it comes off the press. The Switchman's Corner, 7226 Wentwood Drive, Dallas, Texas 75225.

PERE MARQUETTE R.R. information wanted. Rule books, timetables, photos, history, books, maps, etc. Anything related to the steam era of the Pere Marquette is wanted. Write to E. SPURWAY, 3251 OCCIDENTAL ST., SAN DIEGO, CA, 92122.

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THERE MAY STILL BE TIME to get your ad published in RTN's exciting Fifth Anniversary Issue, due out Dec 15. Altho we can't guarantee space after Dec 1, send us your ad if you haven't done so already, and chances are we can work it in. If not, we'll return--nothing lost. ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads: 50¢ per line of 80 spaces. Display Ads: (camera-ready copy) $25 per page (5x8), half page $12.50, quarter page $6.25. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Ad Dept., PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

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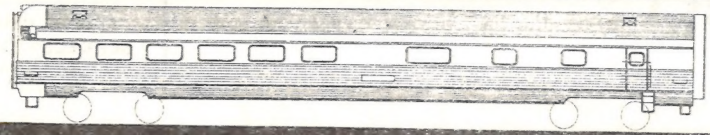
Railway Passenger Car Annual



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